

MDPH Isolation and Quarantine-Related Activities February 2005

Past Activities:

- Consolidated Reportable Disease and Isolation and Quarantine Webpage, available at www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/reportable/reportable.htm
- Isolation and Quarantine Satellite Broadcast (March 2004): Video, CD, Online
- Legal Documents for Isolation (SARS): CD
- Legal Nuts and Bolts of Isolation and Quarantine Training Program (11 trainings have been given to date)
- Training for MDPH lawyers to represent MDPH as Special Assistant Attorneys General (June 2004)
- Distributed materials on isolation and quarantine legal issues to a small group of Superior Court Judges at their annual fall conference (October 2004)
- Legal documents distributed to 60 city and town attorneys at their annual conference in Marlboro (September 2004)
- Emergency Varicella Quarantine Order (January 2005)
- Other new documents: “EMS Responsibilities in Epidemic Infectious Disease” (Duty To Treat), “Options for Financing Hospital Isolation For Someone Unable To Pay”, “Use Of Legal Documents For Other Diseases”, “Police Powers During Public Emergencies” (January 2005)

Current Isolation and Quarantine Activities:

- Continuing questions regarding Isolation and Quarantine
 - The Isolation and Quarantine FAQs will be revised every 4-6 months. Health educators will continue to collect questions (from local boards of health and others) pertaining to isolation and quarantine for possible inclusion into this document.
- Development of Infection Control Training for Local Health
 - The MDPH Health Education Unit is developing a 2-hour training for local public health officials regarding basic infection control and the use of gloves, gowns and eye protection. Timeline for implementation is late spring/early summer 2005.
- Training Targeted to Lawyers, Judges and Magistrates
 - The City Solicitors and Town Counsel Association (CSTCA) holds monthly dinner meetings as an opportunity for training, and they do more in-depth trainings several times per year.
 - Several MDPH staff recently met with 2 lawyers from CSTCA for a brainstorming session on how to reach city solicitors and town managers. There was some discussion about co-sponsoring a training with the Mass Municipal Association (MMA).
- Developing new legislation
 - Senator Moore has again filed a bill in the legislature, based on the model emergency health powers act and on DPH suggestions. The bill focuses on both declared public health emergencies and on public health authority during non-emergency periods. The legislation includes establishing a \$25 million dollar emergency fund, which could provide monetary support for state and local public

health agencies in the event of an emergency. Public hearings on this bill have not yet been scheduled.

- MEMA staff are currently redrafting their laws (dating from the 1950s) pertaining to response to general emergencies. MDPH hopes to work with MEMA for consistency between the pieces of legislation.